

Press Release

Unified Command
Buzzard's Bay Oil Spill

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Beach clean-up crews to double

CAPE COD, Mass., - The Coast Guard and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have directed the responsible party (Bouchard Transportation) to increase the number of personnel involved in beach clean-up operations to 700 people over the next two days based on the assessments made of the response today.

A marine casualty investigation into the cause of the oil spill is ongoing. Any fines or penalties will be assessed when the findings of the investigation are complete. Results of drug and alcohol tests on the crew of the tug *EVENING TIDE* were negative.

An estimated 40 miles of shoreline have been impacted by oil. Tar patties and tar balls are shifting and have caused re-oiling at Mattapoisett Harbor and Sconticut Neck. Teams worked to clear those areas. Current weather conditions are winds out of the south at 10-15 knots with seas from 0 to 4 feet. So far, 3,200 gallons of oil and 535 cubic yards of solid oil waste have been collected, equal in volume to 12 tractor-trailors.

Additional areas impacted by the oil spill to date are:

- Mishaum Point to Horseneck Beach
- Peases Point to Converse Point
- Demarest Lloyd Memorial State Park
- Shore Beach (Little Compton, RI)
- Sippican Neck
- Great Neck
- Naushon Island
- Wild Harbor
- Nye's Neck
- Scraggy Neck (Falmouth)

Five fast response teams from Clean Harbors continue to respond to reports of newly impacted areas. These teams move quickly in small watercraft to clean up impacted areas to minimize damage caused by the oil.

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Five skimmers are available for on-water oil recovery operations and will be directed based on the observations from over flights.

Oil in other impacted areas has formed into tar patties and tar balls, and cannot be skimmed. Shoreline Clean up and Assessment Teams (SCATs) will continue to survey the progress made at impacted shorelines, and protective booming at 15 identified sites will be maintained and monitored.

An expert with the Massachusetts Division of Wildlife accompanied clean up crews to help direct clean up near sensitive areas on Ram Island today. Ram Island is home to the endangered roseate terns. Bird and Penikese islands have also been identified as highly sensitive nesting areas, and are being protected by snare boom.

A wildlife rehabilitation facility is operating at the New Bedford Wastewater Treatment Plant where 54 birds are being rehabilitated with commons loons being the predominant species. So far, 52 birds have been reported dead. The public should not handle oiled or dead wildlife. To report impacted areas or wildlife, contact the Coalition for Buzzard's Bay at **508-999-6363**.

Anyone with financial losses resulting from this spill should contact the responsible party claims hotline at **800-995-4045**.

Questions regarding fisheries closings should be directed to the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries at **508-563-1779**, Mondays through Fridays 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Shoreline Clean Up and Assessment Teams are placing colored flags on impacted beaches and sensitive areas. Orange flags denote shoreline areas in need of cleanup. Yellow flags denote environmentally sensitive habitat areas. If people encounter these flags, they should not remove them.

People should not attempt to remove or clean any oiled beach areas on their own. To report oiled areas please contact the Command Post at 508-968-6659.

Offloading of the remaining gallons of fuel from Bouchard barge B. No. 120 continues at the ESCO terminal. A contracted team of divers has installed a temporary patch to the tear in the barge's tank.

A forward operations center is being established in New Bedford, Mass. This office will assist in the coordination of activity in the affected communities.

For information regarding clean up, media should contact the Joint Information Center at **(508) 968-6440, (508) 968-6650, (508) 968-6652, or (508) 968-6665**.

News, photos and other information on the spill is available to the public at www.incidentnews.gov.

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